Are You A Believer?

by Lou Sweum

"God is not to leave the believers without putting them in the test, lest they be silted away from the good. Nor does God inform you of the future, except for the messengers whom God chooses for such knowledge. Therefore, you shall believe in God and His messengers. If you believe and lead a righteous life, you receive a great recompense."

God brings the above verse to our attention in Surah 3:179. The believers have been, and are being, tested because the heavens and the earth shall be your settlement. Certain, the who stand up for their rights, when injustice befalls them, are not committing any errors. Committing errors is from the people unjustly, and resort to aggression without provocation. These have incurred a patiful retribution. However, maintaining patience and forgiveness reflects a strength of character.

God has given us the best opportunity and outlet for releasing our aggression and that is to fight in the cause of God, advocating righteousness and forbidding evil. All we can do everyday is to strive with everything we have to submit and observe God as He should be observed. God willing, we will be helped by God Almighty.

AGGRESSION CONDEMNED

Say, 'My Lord prohibits only evil deeds, be they obvious or hidden, and sins, and unjustifiable aggression, and to set up besides God powerless idols, and to say about God what you do not know? (7:13).

Aggression is an evil behavior and a poor personality trait. This is why it is condemned in the Quran. We know that patience is advocated in the Quran quite frequently and is recognized by God as an admirable characteristic. Aggression is the opposite behavior, "You shall fight in the cause of God against those who attack you, but do not aggress. God does not love the aggressors. You may kill those who wage war against you, and you may extol them whence they existed, for aggression is worse than murder. Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque, unless they attack you therein. If they attack you, you may kill them. This is the just retribution for such aggressors. If they refrain, then God is Forgiver, Most Merciful. You can also fight them to counter aggression. God does not love aggression. But if they refrain, do not aggress, except against the aggressors!" (2:190-193). There is a verse in the Quran that says the righteous never initiate anything. This verse gives us a lot of information on how we should behave and react to situations. Most of this should be instinctual because God created us and taught us how to distinguish between right and wrong.

Another beautiful example is found in Surah 5:2, "...Do not be provoked by your conflicts with some people into committing injustice. Be equitable, for it is more righteous. You shall observe God. God is fully cognizant of everything you do."

God commands in Surah 16:126-127, "And if you punish, you shall inflict an equivalent punishment. But if you resent to patience (instead of revenge), it would be better for the patient ones. You shall resort to patience and your patience is attainable only with God's help. Do not give over them, and do not be annoyed by their scheming." We must follow God's guidelines given in Surah 42:40-43, "Although the equivalent for an evil work is an equivalent retribution, those who pardon and maintain righteousness are rewarded by God. He does not love the just. Certainly, those who stand up for their rights, when injustice befalls them, are not committing any errors. Committing errors is from the people unjustly, and resort to aggression without provocation. These have incurred a patiful retribution. However, maintaining patience and forgiveness reflects a strength of character."
Fear Stunts Spiritual Growth

Fear underlies repeated retreat from the truth. Such fear is a kind of fixation—an unwillingness to go forward, grow, and learn. This fixation reflects insecurity and grief. Sometimes, a small gray cat moves about in my backyard at night. When the light suddenly comes on, the cat stops in its tracks, thinking that by remaining in a fixed, motionless position no harm shall come to it. Analogously to the frightened gray cat, the disbelief “freeses” in position with other opponents of God’s revelations. Rejectors of the Quran’s message code for fixed-unwilling to move forward, to relinquish loyalty to their ego, false teachings, and traditions of a misguided majority. Fear and Passion fashion a mindset that restricts submission to God alone. Unfortunately, most people resist changing their fixed beliefs because they have spent years convincing themselves and others that their beliefs are true.

"Say, Shall I tell you who the worst losers are? They are the ones whose ways in this life are totally astray, but they think that they are doing good" (18:103-104).

"Anyone who despises the message of the Most Gracious, we appoint a devil to be his constant companion. Such companions will direct them from the path, yet make them believe that they are guided" (43:36-37).

If a person is guided, he or she does not fear the truth. Thus, when opposed to an irrefutable truth (e.g., the Quran’s message code) a truly guided person examines and accepts it. The test of whether one is guided comes with the challenge to accept a truth that was previously rejected, not understood, or unknown.

"Those who are blessed with knowledge will recognize the truth from your Lord, then believe in it, and their hearts will readily accept it. Most assuredly, God guides the believers in the right path" (22:54).

If a person is not blessed with knowledge, he does not overcome his fears and fixed opposition to God’s evidence (i.e., the Quran is the only source of religious guidance in Submission, and 2) on us, God should be exalted and worshiped. He holds fast to the position that suits him and those he admires.

"He (God) thus sets up the devil’s scheme as a test for those who harbor doubts in their hearts, and those whose hearts are hardened. The wicked must remain with the opposition” (22:53).

The leader of this opposition is Satan. He cannot escape Hell. Put another way, he is “fixed” on Hell. Satan knows that when you remain with this opposition, namely his supporters, your misery and unhappiness is virtually assured.

One of Satan’s “names” is MUKHAW-WIF: one who makes souls fearful, faint-hearted, scared, and timid. Satan encourages the fearful to “flee” on anything that undermines psychosocial growth and strength. By God’s name, individuals who refuse to accept God’s revelations stunt their souls. An unstated condemned soul in this life as well as the Hereafter is plagued with fear and anxiety.

"But he who is stingy, though he is rich, and disbelief in the scripture. We will direct him towards misery” (92:8-10).

"Why should you not arrive to reverence God?" (7:113).

The disbeliever is unable to place hope and revere in God. For, to do so, requires the will and courage to move beyond doubt, ignorance, and fear, and to submit totally to God. This is one reason why God says that believers are free of fear and grief.

"Surely, those who believe and lead a righteous life, and observe the constant prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory alms. Surely, their souls will be held in security, and they will be among the righteous" (2:277).


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